



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

February 15, 2005

News Release

INDIAN CITIZEN CONVICTED IN \$5 MILLION DOLLAR MARIJUANA SMUGGLING SCHEME

1852 lbs. of marijuana discovered hidden in trash hauler from Canada

DETROIT—An Indian citizen was convicted Monday of attempting to smuggle more than \$5 million worth of marijuana into the United States from Canada. U.S. Attorney Craig Morford, Eastern District of Michigan, announced the conviction. The federal jury found Surinder Pal Singh, 31, guilty of contraband smuggling after a four-day trial. Singh was residing in Canada at the time of the smuggling attempt.

Singh was arrested in November 2004 at the Blue Water Bridge after entering the U.S. from Canada driving a tractor-trailer containing garbage. During an inspection of the trailer's contents, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) inspectors and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents discovered numerous duffel bags filled with marijuana concealed in the trash. The amount of this high-grade marijuana seized, called "B.C. Bud," totaled 841.58 kilograms with an estimated street value at \$5.5 million.

"There's one less drug smuggler operating on the Michigan-Ontario border as a result of the interdiction efforts of Customs and Border Protection Officers and the investigative work of ICE special agents," said Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent-in-charge of the ICE Detroit Office of Investigations. "This was a significant seizure of drugs both in terms of quantity and by the nature of how it was smuggled—hidden within tons of trash."

The conviction on this significant smuggler comes as a direct result of the hard work that our U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officers provide on a daily basis to keep our nation safe and secure," said Kevin Weeks, director of field operations for U.S. Customs and Border and Protection in Michigan.

Singh appeared before U.S District Court Judge George Steeh of the Eastern District of Michigan. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) inspectors provided assistance; Assistant U.S. Attorney Carl Overman prosecuted this case.

Sentencing is scheduled for May. Singh faces a possible sentence ranging from five to 40 years.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.